

COUNCIL ON HOUSING  
Public Session  
Huling Cove  
Lewes, Delaware  
March 12, 2014

**Motions**

- Approval of the February 12, 2014 Minutes
- Approval for rewording HB196
- Approval of Resolution No. 479, Emergency Fund Program

**Important Dates**

- April 9, 2014 – next Council meeting, Buena Vista Conference Center, New Castle, DE.

Ms. Sokolowski, Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing at 2:00 p.m. on March 12, 2014. In addition to Ms. Sokolowski, the following Council members were present:

Pat Batchelor	Corrine Massey
Francis Julian	Donna Mitchell
Hugh Leahy	Ralph Peters
Connie Louder	Norma Zumsteg

The following Council member was absent and excused from the meeting:

Vincent White

Also attending:

Anas Ben Addi, Director, Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)  
Lynda Blythe, Administrative Specialist III, DSHA  
Dan Brennan, Sr. Application Support Specialist, DSHA  
Cynthia Deakyne, Housing Asset Manager, DSHA  
Susan Eliason, Director of Housing Development, DSHA  
Matthew Heckles, Director of Policy and Planning, DSHA  
Christopher Whaley, Director of Housing Management, DSHA

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Peters moved, and Ms. Batchelor seconded, that the Minutes of February 12, 2014 be approved as written. The motion was passed unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

LOAN REVIEW – Mr. Leahy – no report

OPERATIONS – Ms. Louder – no report

## HOUSING POLICY

Ms. Sokolowski asked that, prior to Mr. Peters' Housing Policy report, Mr. Heckles give a report on HB196, "Source of Income Discrimination Legislation", a copy of which was sent to all Council members and is attached to these Minutes. Mr. Heckles reminded Council that Kyle Hodges, State Council for Persons with Disabilities, who spearheaded the legislation, presented the draft bill to Council in March 2013. The legislation, which was introduced in June 2013 by Rep. Quinton Johnson but tabled, is now getting attention and will probably be brought before the House of Representatives within the next few weeks. The bill amends the State Fair Housing Code by defining "source of income" as anything different than earned income or salary, i.e. Social Security, disability, child support, rental assistance from Section 8, or any other programs, etc. The list is detailed in the bill which is designed to make source of income a protected class so landlords could not discriminate against applicants due to their source of income. Mr. Heckles stressed that landlords would not be required to rent to someone receiving assistance but would permit those applications to be reviewed without prejudice. It also protects the landlord's ability to use references to verify an applicant's ability to afford the rent as per usual. Council is on record, as stated in their 2012 Annual Report, that it endorses the concept of this proposed legislation.

Mr. Peters stated that the Housing Policy Committee spoke with representatives of the Delaware Apartments Association (DAA) to ascertain DAA's point of view and objections, if any, to HB196. A recap of the discussion was distributed to Council and reviewed by Mr. Peters. It is the Committee's recommendation that Council support advocacy of HB196 after the following changes are made:

- Specify clearly that the bill does not require acceptance of voucher holding tenants, and
- Provide a more detailed definition of "commercially reasonable" referred to in the bill

and referred the responsibility for such advocacy to the Communications Committee.

Mr. Peters moved that Council approve rewording of the bill. Ms. Batchelor seconded the motion which was unanimously passed. However, as it is not Council's position to reword legislation, Mr. Heckles will work with Rep. Johnson to provide more specificity.

COMMUNICATIONS – Ms. Batchelor acknowledged the committee has a lot of work to do.

## **2014 LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT (LIHTC)** – Ms. Deakyne

Ms. Deakyne, using the attached PowerPoint presentation, gave a recap of DSHA's LIHTC program which has been reformatted for 2014. Areas highlighted were:

- Application submissions deadline
- Completed application submission requirements
- Part I - General Application
- Part II – Pro Forma
- Information entered in Parts I and II of the application may be auto populated and used in other cells within the application where appropriate for calculations.

- Ranking/Points Score Sheet
- Certification

Council expressed their appreciation for the hard work it took to create such an impressive new application.

### **MOVING TO WORK Program** (MTW) – Christopher Whaley

Mr. Whaley gave a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached) of the Moving To Work program. Highlights of the program:

- Implemented in 1999 and has been renewed through 2018
- Delaware is one of only 37 authorized MTW public housing authorities.
- Is designed to give incentives to subsidized families to obtain employment/self-sufficiency
- There are two tiers lasting 7 years
- A Contract of Mutual Participation (COMP) is signed by participants
- A three-strike policy exists for breach of any responsibility as outlined in the COMP
- Participants may request a hearing for strikes assessed against them
- Resident services and requirements include
  - Specialized case management
  - Education in employment opportunities, budgeting, and finance
  - Referral services to overcome barriers such as child care, transportation, legal assistance, etc.
  - Employment requirements leading to a goal of full-time employment
  - Interest bearing savings accounts from rents paid
- Education is greatly stressed and minimum requirements are set for resident's children
- To date 753 families have successfully completed the program

### **DSHA REPORT** – Mr. Ben Addi

- Bond Bill hearing March 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Ms. Sokolowski and Mr. Peters were thanked for their attendance
  - \$6 million recommended for the affordable rental housing program
  - \$7 million recommended for the new Downtown Development Districts program
- Mr. Ben Addi deferred his update to Council on 3 of 4 grant requests made to DSHA this year until next month. However, he did want to update Council on the Emergency Fund Program
- Emergency Fund Program
  - Created in 1998 by Council's approval for a \$150,000 fund to be disbursed at the Director's discretion
  - Funds are given to help entities, i.e. shelters and other recipients who are faced with severe housing crises with no other immediate assistance available
  - Resolution No. 479, copy attached, replenishes the fund in its entirety. Upon motion made by Ms. Zumsteg, and seconded by Mr. Peters, the motion was unanimously passed.

### **OTHER BUSINESS – OLD/NEW**

Ms. Sokolowski announced Ms. Batchelor's resignation from the Council effective July 1, 2014 or before, if a replacement is appointed. Council was again reminded to ask others to apply via the website.

### **SCHEDLING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on April 9, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at Buena Vista Conference Center, New Castle, DE.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion made by Mr. Leahy, and seconded by Mr. Peters, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lynda T. Blythe".

Lynda T. Blythe

Note: Copies of materials referenced as "attached" in these Minutes are available upon request.